

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



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Lawn and Garden Mower Safety



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reminds consumers to practice safety and common sense when working in their yards and garden this summer. The CPSC states that about 230,000 people each year are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to various lawn and garden tools. Each year 75 people are killed and about 20,000 are injured on or near riding lawnmowers and garden tractors. One out every five deaths involves a child. The CPSC estimates that most of the deaths to children occurred when a child was in the path of a moving mower.

No parent wants to see their child injured. I have seen in several circumstances while driving around, an adult mowing the yard while young children are playing in the same area, or an adult mowing with a young child riding on their lap. For me, this is just as dangerous as children playing in the yard while it is being mowed.

The CPSC has installed safety standards for walk-behind mowers that has substantially reduced the number of mower injuries. They are also working now with industries on a standard for riding mowers to stop the blade if the rider gets off or falls off the seat.

The CPSC advises all consumers to learn about the hazards of each piece of equipment and take the following precautions to prevent injuries to children and themselves from lawn and garden equipment:

- Children should never be in the yard while you're mowing, and they should never ride on the mower. More than 800 young kids get run over or backed over by riding mowers each year. This happens when children fall while being given a ride or when they approach an operating mower. **Always practice the slogan, "ONE SEAT-ONE RIDER!"**
- Never assume that children will stay where you last saw them. Be alert and turn off the mower if children enter the mowing area. Take extra precautions when backing up, going around corners, shrubs, trees or other obstacles.
- Keep children away from power equipment. There are many instances of kids getting burned by touching the hot muffler of a running mower or one that has just recently been shut down.

- Dress appropriately for the job. You should wear sturdy shoes with slip-resistant soles, long pants and long sleeved shirts, close fitting clothes, eye protection, heavy gloves, hearing protection when needed and remove all your jewelry (if you wear any) as it can get caught in moving parts.
- Be sure that you know how to operate the equipment. Be familiar with all the various controls and each of their functions. Make sure that the equipment is in good condition and all the guards, shields, and other safety devices are in place.
- Each time before you start to mow, walk around the area and pick up any debris, rocks, sticks, glass, metal or any other objects that could cause harm to a person or the machine.
- Refrain from ever using electric power tools in wet conditions. For protection against electrocution, use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). GFCIs come in several models, including portable plug-in types and some that are part of extension cords.
- Before each use, check the extension cords to make sure that there are no frays, cuts or open spots of insulation. You should always use a cord that is rated for outdoor use and with a sufficient load capacity for the tools that you will be using.
- Before making adjustments or repairs, disconnect the power from the tool and on gas powered equipment, disconnect the spark plug wires.
- When using power tools, be sure that they are turned off and make them inoperable, if you have to leave the area. This will help prevent them from child use or curiosity.
- Handle gasoline carefully. Remember never fill gas tanks while the machine is operating or when the engine is still hot. Do not fuel or refuel equipment indoors. Store gas in approved containers away from the house. Wipe up spills immediately.
- Never smoke or use any type of flame around gasoline.

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PREVENTION!!*

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~SAFE TODAY- ALIVE TOMORROW~